



CITY OF LACKAWANNA

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Lackawanna Seeks to Scare the Banking Community

City of Lackawanna, NY – October 26, 2015

City of Lackawanna Mayor, Geoffrey M. Szymanski, has planned the first Zombie Property Walk for Friday, October 30, 2015. The activities will commence with a Press Conference in front of City Hall, 714 Ridge Road, Lackawanna, NY at 5:30 PM. Following the Press Event, Mayor Szymanski, invites you to march together with City Officials up Victory Avenue to the Zombie Property located at 77 Victory, where a sign will be placed identifying the lending institution that is responsible for creating the blighting conditions in our neighborhood. The Mayor will be proceeding from the Victory Avenue Zombie Property to four (4) additional such sites in the City of Lackawanna where signs will be placed as well.

Mayor Szymanski stated that Zombie Properties “represent a significant blight in our neighborhoods and the City of Lackawanna will not tolerate the lending community hiding from their obligation to maintain the properties”. The Mayor further stated that “it is completely unconscionable that banks force residents out of their homes and fail to take legal title and responsibility for the properties”.

Zombie Properties have been identified as those properties where the mortgage holder (“Bank”) fails to complete the foreclosure process or take legal title to the properties; leaving the property in the name of the original owners, making it difficult on the municipalities to address the blighting condition or finding responsible parties.

“The City of Lackawanna and all communities throughout Western New York are facing a troubling growth of vacant and distressed Zombie Properties”, noted Fred K. Heinle, Director of Development for the City of Lackawanna. Heinle further stated that, “the City of Lackawanna is joining together with New State Assembly Member Michael Kearns and the Western New York Law Center to develop programs and policies necessary and appropriate to effectively combat this travesty”.

The Mayor identified the initial properties as being as follows:

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| 1. 77 Victory Avenue | HSBC Mortgage Corporation |
| 2. 84 Edna Place | Bank of America |
| 3. 59 Roland Avenue | Wells Fargo |
| 4. 56 Modern Avenue | Wells Fargo |
| 5. 31 Johnson Street | Citimortgage, Inc. |

Fred K. Heinle
Director of Development

Press Release
October 26, 2015
Page Two

In keeping with the season there will be a contest with prizes for best Zombie Costume's for best male youth and adult, best female youth and adult and best pet.

"Let's all work together to scare the corporate lending community into becoming good neighbors and part of the solution instead of being the problem", stated Second Ward Councilmember, Annette Iafallo.

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